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Rep. Boland: censor for the left

To hear Rep. Ed Boland, D-Mass., tell it, it's OK for the Soviet Union to mess around in America's domestic politics and foreign policy debates, but God forbid we should try to influence events anywhere beyond *our* borders. Boland's the author of last year's appropriations amendment barring the president from doing anything congressional liberals might construe as trying to "overthrow" the Nicaraguan government.

But when his Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence put together a report on Soviet manipulation of the American peace movement, Boland took it upon himself to delete the names of politicians and labor leaders who attended a January 1978 meeting in Washington of the Soviet-backed World Peace Council. "I was not willing to see the committee involved in the practice of 'naming names,'" said Boland. Yet, his *Soviet Active Measures* report did name

names where the World Peace Council wasn't involved.

Boland's censoring of the report probably spared certain people some political embarrassment, at least until our columnist John Lofton published their names Monday. But Boland's action cheated his House colleagues and the public of important information about the nuclear freezers.

The American people are entitled to know the names of congressmen, union officials, and other public figures who attended the peace council's meeting. Given that information, each of us will draw his own conclusions, which may or may not be the ones the congressman would like us to draw. Showing up at a Soviet-sponsored propaganda event doesn't make one a communist any more than being elected to Congress makes one inconsistent or shortsighted. Although in Ed Boland's case we're not so sure.